A GODLY AND Faythfull Retractation made and publiſhed at Paules croſſe in London, the yeare of oure Lorde God 1547. the 15. daye of May,

by Mayſter Richard Smyth Doctor of diuinitye, and reader of the Kynges Maieſtyes lecture in Oxford. Reuokyng therin certeyn Errors and faultes by hym committyd in ſome of hys bookes.

Londini, Anno Domini M.D.XLVII.

Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum ſolum.

A godly and Faithfull Retractation made and published at Paules crosse in London, In the yeare of oure Lorde God M. D.xlvij. the xv. daye of May, by M. Richarde Smyth Doctor of diuinity, and reader of it in Oxforde.

THe holy Prophet Dauid (good christen audiẽce) saith right truly: Omnis homo mendax. That is to wytt: Euery man is a Lyer of his owne corrupted nature: The which thing how trew it is, theldest & best Writers in the Christen Church, doo euidently declare, because they all haue erred in their bookes. Wherfore the great Clerke saynt Austen, in an Epipistle writen to Marcella writeth of himself: Vos qui me mul-

tum diligitis, si talem me asseritis, vt nunquam in scriptis errasse me dicatis, frustra laboratis, nec bonam causam suscepistis: facile meipso iudice superamini, quoniã non placet mihi cum a charissimis meis talis existimor, qualis non sum. That is to say: Yee that loue me muche, if ye said that I am such that ye affirme that I neuer erred in my wrytyngs or Bokes, ye labor in vayne, ye haue not taken in hand a good cause: ye are easely ouercome, I my selfe being Iudge: For it pleaseth not me whan I am estemed suche a man of my moast deare frendes as I am not. Here we se that this blessed father saynt Austen was not ashamed to confesse his error in wryting: which thing he dyd not by woordes only, but also in a certayne Booke wherin he wrote very many thyngs in which he confesseth that he was deceyued. This Booke is called in Latyn,

Latyn, Liber Retractationum: And in Englysh, a Booke of Retractations or Reuocations, of such thinges whiche he wrote amysse & erred in. Shall I now be ashamed to acknoledge my self to haue ben deceyued in my Booke of Traditions? Am I worthy to be resembled or compared to this noble auncient Doctor of Christes church? Wyl ye not beleue S. Austen in other poyntes of our Religiõ because he erred, & also confessed his error in dyuerse and sundry thynges of his bokes? To be short, who of all the Writers of bokes erred not? S. Ambros, S. Hierome, Chrisostome, Hilary, Cipzian, Origen, Tertulian, and all the other Doctors of ỹ church were deceyued in some poyntes of their Bookes, as learned men do well know. Why therfore may nott I erre, or why shulde I be ashamed to con-

too confesse myne Errors and too re-
uoke it: Ought not euery good mā
and woman too bee sory for my fall
in this my Booke, and too reioyce
with me acknowledging the trewth
in this matier of mans Traditiōs,
Preceptes, Ordinaunces, Rites, Ce
remonies: Who sayth not that I
haue a iust cause to excuse my weke-
nesse and fault, and aske of you mer
cy: which I trust I haue optayned
of the kynges gracious highnesse,
and his mooste honorable Counsell:
by whose goodnesse and clemency I
am here admytted and suffered too
shew myne Errors and Faultes in
my booke of Traditions, which I
made of late entituled thus: A briefe
Treatise, setting furth diuerse tru-
thes, necessary both too be beleued
of Christen people and kepte also,
which ar not expressed in the Scrip
ture, but lefte to the Churche by the
Apostles

Apostles Traditions, made and set
furth by Richard Smyth, Doctor
of Diuinite and Reder of it in Ox-
forde. Which Booke I do Reproue
& Reuoke in dyuers Faultes in it,
of the which I wyll a non recite cer
tayne perticulerly, and then I shall
geue vnto you a trew and Generall
Doctrine of all those thynges of
which I doo entrete in that my
Boke, that therby you may
well percepue & see, after
what sorte thei ought
too be taken of
Christen
people
that no man
erre
therin,
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FYRST, Wheras I spekyng in my booke of Traditions, of the autorite of Bysshoppes in makyng lawes and ordenances, whyche the people ought to obey, I dyd say & teache in this wyse: That men ought to obey the Bysshoppes commaundement in all thynges leaful, vpon payne of euerlastyng damnacyon. And that these wordes of Mathew: Doo as they byd you, but not as they doo, be vnderstand not only of thinges conteined in Scripture, but also of the Churches ordenaūces beside Scripture made by the Ministers of the Churche, although the said Ministers do abuse their auctorite for their owne benefite and profite. And further, where I taught that it is more conuenient that the people obey their Bisshops cōmaundementes & Decrees although it be but in a thinge indiffe=

indifferent of it selfe and not commaunded by God, then that seruaũtes shuld obey their maisters, or children their fathers and mothers.
And finally, where I sayd concernyng the same matter: That as subiectes be bounde to obey and fulfyll their Princes Lawes, which ar not conteyned in Gods Lawes beyng not agaynst it, euen so be Christen people bounde too obey & doo that which their Bisshops byddeth them doo. All these sayinges I doo now Reuoke, Disanull and Condempne as erronious and false. And do professe and acknowledge fyrst that the auctorite aswell of the Bysshop of Rome, whose auctorite is iustly and lawfully abolyshed in this Realme as of other Bisshops & other called ỹ ministers of the church, consisteth in the dispensacion and ministratiõ of Gods woorde, & not in makyng

Lawes, Ordinaunces and Decrees ouer the people beſyde Gods word without the conſent and auctoritie of the Prince and people.

¶ Secondly, I ſay & affirme that no Byſhop nor none of the Clergy aſſembled togither haue auctoritie to make any Lawes or Decrees beſydes Gods Law ouer the people without the conſent of the Princes and the people: and if they do make anye ſuche, no man is bounde to obey theym.

¶ Thirdly, I ſay that in thoſe coũtryes, where by the auctorite of the Prince they haue made any ſuche Lawes, thauctorite of thoſe Lawes doth not appende and hang of the Biſhops and the Clergy, but of the princes & cheif heds in euery coũtry

¶ Fourthly, I ſay & affirme that within this Realme of England & other the kinges Dominions, there

is no

is no Law, Decree, Ordinaunce or Constitution ecclesiasticall in force and auaileable by any mans auctority, but only by the Kynges maiestyes auctority or of his Parliamēt.

And where in any forsaid booke of Traditiōs, I sayd that Tenthes of Benefices be dew only to theym that do preche and teche the Scripture, and also that he that serueth not he Aulter nor precheth not the Gospell can nott iustly lyue by the Tenthes, but is in conscience boūd to restore the profites and frutes taken therby: Which my sayenges as it lieth in woordes & sentences is seditious and sclaunderous to the Kynges maiesties proceedinges and the Lawes and Ordres of this Realme, which haue graunted Tenthes and Tythes to many Ley persones: Therfore this my sayeng as it may be taken, & iustly by the wor-

des

des and ſentences as they be put, I wyl not nor entend to defende nor aueere the ſame: but I requyre that I may put theym and declare theim gently, that I ment not in theſe my ſayinges of any Lay men, to the derogation of the Lawes and Statutes of this Realme: but I ment only of Curates and Preeſtes which receyuing their Tythes, do not their dutyes accordingly.

And where alſo in my ſayd booke of Traditions, and lykewyſe in my boke of the Sacrifice of the Maſſe, I folowyng Damaſcene and other Auncient Authors, wrote, that the Diſciples of Chriſt dyd make certayne Canons, which ſaint Clement dyd gether togither and put in wryting, and that theſe ſame Canons muſt be taken for the Appoſtles doctrine and techyng, and their wordes without doubt to be beleued & kepte as that which is cõteyned er-

pzeffely in ſcripture. Now hauynge red many thynges, whiche at that tyme I had not diligently marked & wayed: I doo thinke, affirme, and cõfeſſe that doctrine to be not trew, but a vayne, vnlawfull, vniuſt, and vnpoztable burden to Chriſten conſciences: And that thoſe Canons pzetended to be of thappoſtles making and gatherd of ſaint Clement, not to be made of thappoſtles: oz if they were, not to be made otherwiſe than but foz an ozder in the Church foz that tyme, not euer foz to endure wherof many at this tyme in no wyſe be too be obſerued: And thoſe which do remayne, not to be of that fozce as Gods lawe to charge mens conſcieces otherwiſe, then as mans Ozdinaunces and Policie whiche may be taken away by Superioz powers aſwel & with ſo lytle ſcruple of cõſcience as other of them which

many

many yeres a go were taken away, & to sum clene contrary lawes made

In the said boke of Traditions also I sayd & affirmed, that Christ and his Appostles taught and lefte to the church many things without writyng which we must both beleue stedfastly & also fulfyll obediently vnder payne of dampnation euer to endure. Amongest the which I rehersed by name a greate nomber to be obeyed, kepte & folowed: as the obseruation of Lent from flesh or wyne, the keppyng of the Sacramēt in the Pyx, the receyuing of it at the preestes handes, the hallowyng of the water in the Font, the thrise dippyng of the Chylde in the water at the Christenyng, the puttyng on of the Chrisome, the Consecration of the Oyle, & Anoyntyng of the christened chylde, the hallowyng of the Aulters, the prayeng towardes the

East

East, the Sensyng of the aultare, the Wasshyng of the handes, & sayeng Confiteor, and liftyng vp of the Sacrament at the Masse, the makyng of Holy Water, That the .xii Appostles (euery man a peace for his portiõ) made the Crede, & many mo besydes these. And after lyke sorte I spake of Canons, Decrees, and Ordinaunces of bysshops and generall counsels.

Now I do confesse the saide doctrine as concernyng thobseruyng of the sayd Traditions vnder that payne, to be false and Tirannicall, an vniust, vnlawfull, and vntrew burdein of mens consciences, not fit to be taught, preched, or defended,

Lykewyse of the beleuynge of thinges where I dyd say, that there are dyuerse thynges not expressed in the scripture which we are boũde to beleue egally with those thynges

which

which arr wzitten in Scripture, in the nomber of which I dyd cõfusely & indiscretely for an example bzing some of the afore rehersed and other many. As cõcernyng many thyngs in my booke put, and the more nomber there by me reconed and named I affirme and say to be false, and in no wyse trew, but very daungerous and vniustly, onerous to the consciences of chzisten men: and too be trew only in those Doctrines which necessaryly may be gathered, & consequently doo folow too the wordes and sentences in Scripture, so that in effect they may be iustly counted to be in scripture, though the very fourme of woordes be not there: Of the which in my Booke is very few, yet some I dyd reherse: as Baptismus puerorũ, Descensus Christi ad inferos, Virginitas Marie, Trinitas personarum, Processio Spiritus sancti, and a

few

few other.

And bicause I wold declare the trew acceptions, dignitie and auctoritie of scripture too be distincte, diuerse, & of higher, surer, moze stable and firme ozder and credence, then the other vnwzitten Tradicions & Assertions, wandzing in thobseruation of many peres, & the churches canons and Decres, ozdinaunces and traditions left by succession.

Here I do declare, set furth, confesse, affirme, and asserte my trew & stedfast opinion, beleke and fayth in these thynges pzopounded & vttred vnto me as concernyng scripture wzitten, and other Traditions vnwzitten and not declared in the said holy Scripture.

The scripture of tholde and new Testament wzitten by thinspiratiõ of the Holy ghost concernyng our beleke, is too be beleued, accepted &

taken as an vndoubted truthe, not to be altered, reformed or chaunged by any man, nor to be minished nor abrogate by any custome, but vnder perell of dampnation to be beleued, and vnder the same daunger to be followed, hauyng auctoritie geuē vnto it by almightie god, taught & enspired by the holy ghost dependyng of no mans auctorite, nor violable or defesible by any power, otherwise then vnder the perell & daūger of eternall damnatiō.

Suche thynges as in the Actes of the Apostles or any other place of Scripture, as for a tyme was taught and setfurthe for an introduction of the weake in the fayth, not to remayne for euer, as fayth increased was abrogate, none otherwise than it was thauctors mynde and intentes they shuld those that concerned eatyng, drinkyng, couerynge

ryng or discouerying of heades, or such other externe rites and ceremonyes, rather concernyng an ordre among men outwardly to be for a tyme obserued, than an eternall law to rule and gouerne the soule.

Suche thynges as sometyme be called traditions not expressely and by wordes found in holy scripture, but which may necessarily and well be gathered of holy scripture, are to be beleued and followed, in somuche & as farr as they may truly be gathered of the scripture, or consequently doo follow the wourdes and intentes of the same.

Traditiõs pretended to be made of thappostles, & by some authors ascribed to theym as concernyng thinges to be beleued not found in scripture directly nor necessarily, & directly consecutyng & followyng to scripture, lawfully & wout perell of

dampnation may be doubted of, & also denyed and refused by the superior powers, & suche as haue Auctoritie in the church.

There be many thinges ascribed to thappostles, & called traditions deduced from the tyme of thappostles & read in the name of olde Authors, and set furth vnder the pretensed title of their name, which be feyned, forged & nothing trew, full of superstition and vntrewth, feyned by theym which wold magnify their owne power and auctoritie, as is the Epistles of Clemens, Anacletus, Euaristus and Fabianus, & other which arr set furth by the bysshop of Rome and his complices, which be forged, feyned and of none auctoritie nor to be beleued, but cõterfeyted by theym: who with the color of antiquitie wolde magnify that vsurped power of the bysshop of Rome.

Traditions of the churche, whether they be indeed or haue ben coũted so aunciẽt that they haue ben vsed frõ the begynnyng of the churh & the tyme of thapostles, or els haue ben appoynted and prescribed of later dayes by Decrees of the bysshop of Rome or other bysshops or by generall counsels concernyng superiorite of one bysshop ouer another: Watching, Fasting, Kneeling Sensynges, Enoyntyng, Blessings and all other suche Rites, Ceremonyes and comen Orders to be vsed in the church of God, doth not bynd but where they be receyued, and by disuse maye be abrogate, or by contrary law made in any countrey by thauctority of the superior powers many be clene taken away, & other Rites, Canons, Traditions & Ceremonyes brought in for them without any daũger of synne or grudge

of

of conſcience. And with any ſuche laſt afore reherſed, the Kynges maieſtie for the tyme beyng may either of laufull and iuſt cauſe, or of his mere goodneſſe without any cauſe diſpence or abſolue, any man frō beyng bound to theym.

And the ſayd perſone with whom the ſuperior powers haue diſpenſed with all, and ſo made free from them, may vſe his ſaid lybertie without any daunger of ſynne or ſcruple of conſcience, either to the Kynges maieſtie which gaue lybertie, or to him whiche hath obteyned the lybertie or Diſpenſacion. None otherwyſe than in any other acte, ſtatute or proclamation made by humane polycie, the Kynges maieſtye and the hygh powers may. Whan contrary wyſe that that is Goddes law and commaunded by ſcripture alwaies to be obſerued, no man can

diſpence

dispence with it, nor gyue any man libertie to breake it, vnder daunger of synne & corruption of conscience.

This is my full, firme, and stable beleke as touchynge the scripture writton, & Traditions vnwritten, & what thyng soeuer I or any other heretofore haue preached, taught, written or endyted to the contrary of these my assertions & beleke now declared vnto you: or if any man hereafter (which God forbyd) shuld preach, teach or set furth any thing which is not consonaunt & agreyng to these aforesayd articles and assercions, beleue good hearers, and know you surely, that it is a false, vntrew & deuellysh doctrine and vngodlye vsurpation vpon the holly Scripture, contrary too the trew, pure, and Catholicall doctrine of Chrystes churche. In the which faythe and beleef conteyned in the

sayd

sayd. vi. Assertions, I doo entende good hearers with the grace of almighty God to lyue by Chryst, and all my hope is also too dye therin if need shalbe. And whensoeuer God shall call me therunto(his grace assistyng) I shalbe redy.

AND now concernyng another booke whiche I made of the Sacrifice of the Masse, where the moast chiefe and principall article of our fayth, and moast directly perteynyng too the redemption of our synnes and to our saluation is: That our sauyor Chryst Jesu by his moast precious death and effusion of his moast precious blood vpon the crosse dyd redeme man kynde, taking away our synnes, pacifying the indignation of his father, and cancellyng thobligation that was agaynst vs: In which Sacrifice makyng

makyng vnto his father, our sayde Sauyoure Jhesus Christ as saynt Paule sayth playnly to the Hebrewes, was not a preest after the order of Aaron, forasmuch as he was of another Trybe: and also, that preesthod was imperfite and vnprofitable bringyng nothyng too perfection: But our Sauyour Christ made his sacrifice vpon the Crosse parfectly, absolutely, and with the most hyghest perfection that could be, somuch, that after that one oblation and sacrifice for syn made by hym but once only, nother he nor any other creature shuld at any tyme after, make any mo oblacions for the same. And for as that saynt Paule sayth, he was called an eternall preest of the order of Melchysedech, and not of Aaron.

This fayth ought euery man and woman vndoubtedly to beleue and

openly to professe vpon payne of e-
uerlastyng dampnation, and also
too dye in this professyon if case
shall so requyre: The which moast
holsome & moast necessary doctrine
of our fayth I not dilygently con-
sideryng, as many tymes too right
great clerkes & lerned men in much
writynge in lyke mattiers it hath
chaunced to say too far. The infir-
mite and weakenesse of men beyng
suche, that seldome in many words
error hath escaped. So in my boke
of the Sacrifice of the masse, I dyd
incircumspectly & rashly write and
set furth too the people, that Christ
was not a preest after the order of
Melchisedech, whan he offred him-
selfe vpon the Crosse too his father
for our synnes, but was a preest af-
ter the order of Aaron. And that
when Christ dyd offer his owne bo-
dy too his father after thorder of
Melchi-

Melchisedech appease his wrath, it may not be vnderstand of the sacrifice of the crosse, but of the sacrifice that Christ made at his Maundy in forme of bread and wyne: To the which in dede saynt Paules doctrine is contrary, both in other places, and in thepistle ad Hebreos very manifestly, agaynst whom, who without doubt had the very spirite of God. Neither it becometh, nor I wyl not willingly teach or defend any thyng: Wherfore you shal impute that, good Audience, too the frailty of mans nature, and too my negligent marking, hauing at that tyme rather a respecte too a fantasy that then I had in my mynde, than too the trew and infallyble doctrine of scripture. And moreouer in the same my booke, I sayd not onely that the Sacrifice of the masse is the selfe same substaunce of Christ

but also the selfe same oblacion or offeryng of our sauyoure Chzistes very flesh and blood which him selfe once offrid to his father on the crosse to appeale his wzath. And that the pzeestes do continually and daily in the masse offre not onely the selfe same body of Chzist, but also to the same effecte, that Chzist dyd offre himselfe to his father at his Maundy. Of the which wozdes and doctrine, if they be not very warely & circumspectly reade, and moze fauozably taken then the wozdes as they lye, may well bere, it might be gatherd, that pzeestes herein be egall with Chzist. Pzeestes of thozder of Melchisedech, appealing the wzath & indignation of the father of heauen, crucifying oz offeryng Chzist to the same effecte that Chzist in his owne persone dyd vpon the crosse, which is a blasphemy intolerable

terable to be herd of chriſten eares. For Chriſt as ſaynt Paule ſayth, was but once offered, once gaue vp himſelfe for the redemption of our ſynnes on good friday on the croſſe, nor neuer before nor after was offered for vs, but in a ſacrament and as a commemoration of the ſame. And ſo of the Maundy or Supper of our Lorde, Chriſt himſelf ſayth Hec quotieſcũq; feceritis, in meam commemorationem facietis. Ones he dyed for our ſynnes, and once agayne he roſe for our iuſtification. He dyeth no more, & his ſacrifice was ſo good ſo ful, ſo pleſant, ſo precious to god, that there needed no more oblatiõs to appeaſe god, nor only for the ſynnes paſt, but alſo for all the ſynnes to the day of Doome.

There neede no more ſacrifices, no more offerers, but as hauyng a reſpect and a remembraunce of that

moſt holy, moſt perfyte, and moſt entier Lambe, then & for euer offred vp for vs. But theſe before ſayd I can not deny but ſpoken of me and wzitten, And as I do not now lyke theym, ſo at therample of ſaint Auſten and other good doctozs, I am not aſhamed to retracte theym, call theim agayne, & condempne theim. For when I folowed myne own inuention not directed by Scripture, I began as the nature of man is to wander, and at the laſt went cleane contrary too Gods woozd.

Wherfoze, I hertely exhozt euery man as touchyng matiers of faith to founde the ſame vpon Gods certeyn, trew, and infallyble woozde: leſt by doyng the contrary, they fall into ſuperſtition, idolatry, & other manyfold errers as I my ſelf ſometyme, and many other (although I doo not come hyther too accuſe any

man

man) yet I perceyue of late tyme haue doone. Wherfore, these my two bookes, the one of the Sacrifice of the masse, and thother of the Traditiõs vnwritten, in those poyntes before rehersed, & all other wher in they be not full cõsonant to scripture, I forsake & renounce as false erroneous, and agaynst the trew woord of God. Requiring the good christen reder whosoeuer shall rede theym, to geue no further credence vnto theym then I wold my selfe: That is, not to take as vndoubted truth all that is therin written, but as written of a man that sometyme falleth: to be so farre trew as they be consonaunt to scripture, wher they be not agaynst scripture, to be humane persuasion, which may either be so or not so, as the great resone shall leade: where they be not consonaunt to scripture to be erro-

neous

neoule and falſe, and that I muche lament & am ſoꝛy that I wꝛote them in thoſe poyntes. And I deſyꝛe euery man that hath any of the ſayd bokes, to beware of theym, and to gyue no credence to theym in all ſuche thynges in theim wꝛitten, as be not conſonant to the ſcripture, as they auoyde occaſion of erroꝛ, and tendꝛe the truth of Gods woꝛd and his gloꝛy. ¶ To whom be laude, pꝛayſe, and honoꝛ
Amen.

Imprented at London in Paules churchyarde at the ſygne of the braſen ſerpent by Reynolde Wolfe.